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KASHMIR DISPUTE

Submitted by the

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Concurred in by the

INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

on 16 July 1957. Concurring were the Special Assistant, Intelligence, Department of State; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Army; the Director of Naval Intelligence; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; and the Deputy Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff. The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the IAC, and the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, abstained, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

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PROBABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE KASHMIR DISPUTE

THE PROBLEM

To estimate probable developments in the Kashmir dispute through early 1958, with particular reference to the likelihood of major military clashes or other disturbances.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Tensions between India and Pakistan over Kashmir will continue high during the next six to nine months, and the outlook is for a period of intensified political and diplomatic maneuvering by both countries. However, the likelihood of major hostilities remains small. (*Paras. 11, 18*)
2. Pakistan's probable failure to obtain significant concessions from India through the UN may lead it to consider more forceful measures for obtaining a satisfactory settlement, but it will probably conclude that the chances of success are not sufficient to justify the military and political risks. (*Paras. 9, 14*)
3. There is only a slight chance that major hostilities will develop through inadvertence or miscalculation, and, except in the event of major hostilities, the odds are against the outbreak of widespread communal disturbances. (*Paras. 12-17*)
4. In the diplomatic contest over Kashmir, the US will almost certainly be subjected to strong pressures from both sides, and is bound to incur some bad feelings in India and Pakistan. The Kashmir dispute will continue to be a major source of friction between India and Pakistan and an obstacle to the development of stability and economic strength in the area. (*Paras. 19-21*)

DISCUSSION

5. Kashmir has been the principal source of contention between India and Pakistan ever since the early months of their independence in 1947. Despite recurrent flare-ups of tension, there has been no large-scale fighting since the UN-sponsored cease-fire of 1 January 1949, under which India was left in control of the most important and populous areas of the state, including the Vale of Kashmir. However, both India and Pakistan have continued to assert conflicting claims to all of Kashmir and have maintained substantial forces along the cease-fire line. Pakistan supports an Azad (Free) Kashmir government

for the portions of the state under its control, and India has incorporated a Kashmir provincial government into its federal structure.

6. Pakistan is now engaged in a major effort to gain support against India on the Kashmir issue. On 24 January, the UN Security Council gave unanimous approval (the USSR abstaining) to a Pakistani-backed resolution renewing the SC's earlier call for a plebiscite in Kashmir. Pakistan is now planning to raise the issue again at the Security Council and may also seek to have the matter presented to the General Assembly this fall. To emphasize its demands for action, Pakistan may propose such drastic measures as the stationing of UN forces in Kashmir.

7. Pakistan has succeeded in calling forcefully to world attention India's continued refusal to follow UN recommendations for a Kashmir settlement. India has been embarrassed and its leaders have been made more conscious of their international isolation on the Kashmir issue. In recent discussions with Western diplomats and journalists, Indian leaders, while continuing to put forward the legal arguments on which they have consistently relied, have also emphasized their basic objections to Pakistan's appeal to religious emotions in the Kashmir case. In this connection, they argue that exacerbation of the issue might stir up communal animosities in India between the Hindu majority and the sizable Moslem minority.

8. Any significant advance toward a settlement through the UN is extremely unlikely, even if Pakistan musters a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly. Regardless of UN pressures, India will probably remain determined to resist any weakening of its hold on Kashmir. The UN, for its part, will almost certainly refuse to impose sanctions against a clearly determined India. At most, the UN will initiate another effort in the long series of fruitless international attempts at settlement.

9. If, after another round of UN consideration, the Pakistanis find their case no further advanced, the Pakistan government will probably feel compelled to examine more seriously

possibilities of forcing a solution by other than diplomatic means. The current crisis has already evoked the usual threats of forceful action by bellicose elements in Pakistan. With Pakistan's first general elections tentatively scheduled to take place next spring, both opposition and pro-government politicians are likely to make increased use of the Kashmir issue as a means of winning popular support. However, there is now little evidence of broad popular demand for a war policy. The present government has shown itself capable of influencing public opinion in foreign affairs and of suppressing the pro-war elements. There is a possibility that the present government, beset by rivalries at the highest levels, might be replaced before elections. However the likely successor would be a more authoritarian regime, presumably headed by President Mirza and backed by the army and civil service, and would almost certainly be less susceptible to public pressures and less likely to embark on a military adventure in Kashmir.

10. Feeling about Kashmir will continue strong in India also. Popular opinion in support of the position of the ruling Congress Party on Kashmir was whipped up during the recent election campaign and the government is deeply committed politically to its present stand. The Indian government is nettled by Pakistan's success in the UN. It fears that US military aid is significantly reducing its margin of military superiority over Pakistan.* It is also irritated by feeling compelled to spend heavily on defense against Pakistan

* The Indian military establishment greatly outnumbers that of Pakistan. India has 406,000 in ground forces as against 174,000 (including Azad Kashmir units) for Pakistan, and is also quantitatively superior in military aircraft and naval vessels. The re-equipping of key Pakistani units with US assistance may give Pakistan some temporary qualitative advantage with respect to some units or types of equipment. However, India is also modernizing its forces, and with its sheer weight of numbers, its far better developed industrial and logistic base, and its ability to operate along interior lines of communication, will retain overall military superiority. In Kashmir, India has 70,000 to 75,000 ground troops and Pakistan has 28,000, of which 20,000 are Azad Kashmir forces.

at a time of economic stringency. Nonetheless, India is unlikely to initiate any action to upset the present stalemate. Its control of Kashmir is based largely on police repression and an authoritarian state government backed by the Indian army, the publicizing of which might further alienate world opinion. In addition, any move toward a plebiscite would be detrimental to Indian interests, since the Moslem majority in Kashmir would probably vote in favor of Pakistan.

11. Accordingly, while the six to nine months immediately ahead are likely to be tense, we continue to believe that the likelihood of any major outbreak of violence remains small. The responsible leaders of both India and Pakistan almost certainly consider it would be folly to permit general hostilities to develop. India, with the key areas of Kashmir already under its control, would have little to gain and much to lose by a war in which the price of victory might be the disruption of the Indian economy and widespread communal rioting between Moslems and Hindus. In Pakistan, there is a general tendency in military circles to disparage the fighting ability of the Indians and some signs of restiveness have appeared among the younger officers. However, the Pakistani high command seems to be firmly in control of the military establishment and almost certainly recognizes that its forces are too weak to invite a general test of strength with India.

12. There is some slight chance that major hostilities will develop through inadvertence or miscalculation. There have been indications that the Pakistan authorities have discussed the possibility of provoking limited hostilities in Kashmir with a view to forcing UN intervention as in the case of the Suez crisis. Such a provocation might lead to major Indian counterattack. The Indian government might contribute to tensions by troop movements or border incidents designed to discourage Pakistani military initiatives and to impress world opinion with the gravity of the military threat from Pakistan.

13. However, it is highly unlikely that such a course of developments would lead to the outbreak of major hostilities. The Pakistan gov-

ernment almost certainly realizes that the odds are against its wresting major concessions from India by means of its present UN maneuvers. The Pakistanis probably look on the present diplomatic campaign primarily as a means of demonstrating concern for Kashmir to the Pakistani public and of laying a foundation for further efforts to embarrass and isolate India internationally. Given the success achieved thus far, Pakistan is unlikely to undertake actions which would enable India to label it an aggressor and thus jeopardize the international sympathy it has gained.

14. Any military action initiated by the Pakistanis would have serious drawbacks for them. They almost certainly realize that an attack with regular military forces would offer little promise of shaking India's hold in Kashmir, would expose Pakistan to UN condemnation, and would risk the loss of US aid. Use of Azad Kashmiri or tribal forces would be even less effective, while still involving the risk of Indian counterattack and leaving Pakistan exposed to charges of aggression. Moreover, the bringing forward of tribal forces through Pakistani territory would involve difficult problems of discipline and control.

15. Attempts to stir up trouble among the Moslem majority within Indian-controlled Kashmir would probably fail in the face of the police state methods employed by the Indian Kashmir government. In general, the various possible means of nonmilitary harassment of India — e.g., economic sanctions or rupture of diplomatic relations — would probably have little coercive effect on India and, directly or as a result of Indian counter-moves, might actually hurt Pakistan more than India.

16. Although there will continue to be some danger of provocative moves along the borders by Azad Kashmiris, tribesmen, or hotheaded local commanders of regular Pakistani or Indian forces, the odds are against serious trouble arising in such fashion. The leaders of the present Azad Kashmir government are less extremist than their predecessors and in any event would probably be unable to undertake large-scale action without official Pakistani support. Tribal forays could not be under-

taken without the connivance of Pakistani or Azad Kashmiri forces guarding the cease-fire line and would require Pakistani logistical support to have any great impact. We have no evidence of organized activist sentiment within either the Pakistani or the Indian army and, even if it should develop, the military high command would probably move promptly to repress any outbreak.

17. The likelihood of large-scale communal rioting is difficult to assess, because mob feelings are capable of flaring up suddenly with little apparent cause. Except in the event of major hostilities, the odds would appear to be against the outbreak of widespread disturbances, even if tensions should increase. While the Indian government has expressed concern about the communal problem, it has been successful in preventing major outbreaks during the recurrent crises of the last 10 years and may be exaggerating its fears to discourage US support for Pakistan. The large Moslem minority in India, fearful of its safety in Hindu India, is unlikely to initiate communal strife. In Pakistan the bulk of the Hindu minority is in East Bengal, where emotion on the Kashmir issue is relatively weak, although were communal rioting to break out in India, it could readily spread to East Pakistan. In Kashmir itself, harsh police controls will probably continue to be effective in preventing popular outbursts. Should hostilities develop between India and Pakistan, however, the danger of major communal disturbances, especially those initiated by Hindu extremists in India, would become very great.

18. Thus the outlook is for a period of intensified maneuvers by India and Pakistan — especially the latter — marked by recriminations and veiled threats by both sides, but probably without resort to violent action. Pakistan will almost certainly continue its efforts to isolate and embarrass India, probably including attempts to organize international economic pressures against the Nehru government. India will probably seek to counter Pakistan's attempts to enlist new support for its position and especially to prevent Pakistan from securing additional support in the

Moslem world. India will probably also seek to impress upon world opinion the dangers of disturbing the status quo in Kashmir.

19. In this diplomatic contest, the US — and to a lesser extent the UK — will almost certainly be subjected to strong pressures from both sides. The Pakistanis will cite the temper of their people, and the difficulty of restraining activist pressures. The Pakistan government will probably argue that failure to provide all-out support to its efforts to obtain a solution to the Kashmir dispute would bolster neutralist elements and make more difficult continuance of the government's pro-West policies. India is likely to accuse the US of responsibility, through military aid and alliances, for Pakistan's aggressive attitude, and will probably continue its efforts to convince the US of the dangers of communal rioting or war should Pakistan be encouraged to continue its pressures. The USSR will almost certainly continue to support India and to exploit the latter's disappointment with the West.

20. The US is bound to incur some bad feelings in both India and Pakistan as a result of these conflicting pressures. Barring any major shift in US policies, however, it is unlikely that the attitudes of the Indian and Pakistan governments toward the US will undergo major changes as a result of the Kashmir dispute during the period of this estimate. Both governments are aware of the US unwillingness to alienate the other completely. Moreover, both are probably acutely aware of their continued dependence on the US, — India for economic assistance, and Pakistan for economic, military, and general diplomatic support.

21. Prospects are that the Kashmir dispute will continue to be a symbol and a major source of friction between India and Pakistan and a principal cause of their costly competition in armaments. It is thus likely to remain an obstacle to the development of stability and economic strength in the area and hurtful to US interests in the area.

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